

CLAIMS LISTING:

Please cancel claims 26-39 and 45-100.

1. (Previously Presented) A method to provide directory assistance to a caller attempting to place a telephone call to an unavailable telephone number, the method comprising the steps of:

detecting a caller's telephone call to an unavailable number on a telephony network;

intercepting the telephone call on the telephony network to the unavailable number before initiating any action by the telephony network back to the caller, wherein the unavailable number includes non-existent numbers or numbers not implemented on the telephony network;

automatically routing the detected and intercepted telephone call to an automatic intercept system associated with a directory assistance service;

automatically routing the detected and intercepted telephone call from the automatic intercept system to the directory assistance service; and

providing at least one advertisement to the caller from the directory assistance service.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of intercepting the telephone call includes intercepting the telephone call at a central office local to the caller.

3. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of intercepting the telephone call includes intercepting the telephone call at a central office remote to the caller.

4. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the directory assistance service is one of a group consisting of: a local directory service, a regional directory service, a national directory service, an international directory service, and a specialized directory service.

5. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including the step of prompting the caller with an option of obtaining directory assistance for a fee.

6. (Original) The method of claim 1, further including the step of providing directory assistance to the caller.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein a fee is generated by the provision of the directory assistance to the caller.

8. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein the step of providing directory assistance includes the steps of: determining information associated with the unavailable telephone number; and taking an action based at least in part on the associated information.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of taking an action includes providing the information to the caller.

10. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the step of determining information includes determining information associated with an unavailable subscriber represented by the unavailable telephone number.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the step of determining information further includes the step of determining information associated with at least one available subscriber having a classification at least similar to a classification of the unavailable subscriber.

12. (Canceled).

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement includes at least one generalized advertisement.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the at least one advertisement includes at least one targeted advertisement.

15. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the at least one targeted advertisement is selected based at least in part on a characteristic associated with the caller.

16. (Original) The method of claim 14, wherein the at least one targeted advertisement is selected based at least in part on a characteristic associated with the unavailable number.

17. – 21. (**Canceled**).

22. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of: receiving information from the caller representative of a desired subscriber; identifying at least one subscriber being at least substantially similar to the desired subscriber; and providing information associated with the at least one identified subscriber to the caller.

23. (Original) The method of claim 22, wherein the information associated with the identified subscriber is one of a group consisting of: a telephone number; an identifier; and a location.

24. (Original) The method of claim 22, further comprising the steps of: receiving input from the caller indicating a selection of an identified subscriber; and connecting the caller to a telephone number associated with the selected subscriber.

25. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the unavailable number includes a nonexistent number.

Claims 26-39. **(Canceled)**.

41. (Previously presented) A system for providing directory assistance to a caller attempting to place a telephone call to an unavailable telephone number, the system comprising: a directory assistance service; and an intercept system coupled to the directory assistance service, wherein the intercept system is adapted to intercept the telephone call made to the unavailable telephone number and to route the erroneous telephone call to the directory assistance service; and provide at least one advertisement to the caller.

42. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein the directory assistance service is one of a group consisting of: a local directory service, a regional directory service, a national directory service, an international directory service, and a specialized directory service.

43. (Original) The system of claim 41, wherein the directory assistance service is adapted to provide information associated with the unavailable telephone number to the caller.

44. (Original) The system of claim 43, wherein the information associated with the unavailable telephone number includes information related to an unavailable subscriber associated with the unavailable telephone number.

Claims **45-100** (Canceled).